

Local Artist Chosen to Show at Boston Children's Museum

By MORAG MACLACHLAN



Craig Bloodgood, special projects curator at the Art Complex Museum, was chosen by the Boston Children's Museum to create two permanent installations as part of the museum's expansion project. Bloodgood will build two rolling ball sculptures similar to the one pictured.

When the Boston Children's Museum reopens its doors next year to celebrate its \$30 million expansion, a local sculptor's work will be on display.

Craig Bloodgood, special projects curator at the Art Complex Museum, was chosen by the Boston Children's Museum to create two permanent kinetic window installations in the museum's new Raceway exhibitions. Bloodgood will build two rolling ball sculptures allowing children to drop golf balls into the wooden contraption, watching and listening as the balls wind through the machine.

Bloodgood was selected to create two installations as part of a call for artists from around New England. The UrbanArts Institute, which Bloodgood explained matches artists with public work, looked through its bank of slides to determine which artists might have a chance at being selected by the museum. Bloodgood had no slides of his work in the bank and he did not respond to the call for artists. However, his reputation preceded him. Christina Lanzl, UrbanArts Institute project manager and former Art Complex Museum artist in residence, contacted Bloodgood, encouraging him to apply.

"She told me that my name had come up," Bloodgood



Bloodgood's rolling ball sculptures have been featured in museums before, like this one called Crazy Quilt that was on display at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton.

said. "I've had three solo exhibitions with rolling ball work. So, I sent her to my website and I was chosen as a finalist based on my previous work."

Bloodgood was one of three finalists chosen to submit a proposal to the children's museum. The museum gave the finalists three weeks to create a prototype. At the end of August, Bloodgood

brought his eight-foot tall model up to Boston.

Last week, the museum contacted Bloodgood to inform him that he had been selected to build two of the three permanent installations. His rolling ball sculptures will be made of wood and artist Christy Georg will create the final sculpture out of metal. Each installation will fit into one of the three 10 by four foot brick archways that sit in the museum's former lobby. Bloodgood must now concentrate on designing his two sculptures that can be used by and stand up to the museum's 400,000 annual visitors.

Bloodgood said his project will have several goals. The museum is designed for children up to 10 years old. Since they will be of varying heights, Bloodgood has built a periscope lifter, a rectangular tube with a pulley that allows children to load a golf ball and lift it to the top of the sculpture.

Another goal of Bloodgood is to have the balls pass through different tracks. He has installed a two-sided switching mechanism, sending every other ball in a different direction.

"That way kids can play more than once and see different things happening," Bloodgood said.

Bloodgood wants his sculptures to captivate children visually and auditorily. He designed a piece he calls

the centipede. As a golf ball moves through the centipede, the wooden dowels rock back and forth like the legs of a centipede. The motion also produces a clacking noise.

Bloodgood has until Nov. 30 to submit his final designs for his two sculptures. He will use his time until then to tweak his original model.

"You need to leave room for good things to pop out of nowhere," Bloodgood said.

The completed rolling ball window installations are due on March 7, in time for the Boston Children's Museum's grand reopening.



Bloodgood calls this portion of the sculpture the centipede. As a golf ball moves through the centipede, the wooden dowels rock back and forth like the legs of a centipede.